Serving of quality biscuits in Railways

2692. SHRI O.P. KOHLI: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Railways are serving/selling/providing—only inferior quality biscuits in their restaurants, in the trains and on the platforms rather than biscuits of reputed manufacturers;

(b) if so, the details of the biscuits that are on sale in the Railways all over the country, especially in Northern Railway;

(c) the steps taken to introduce quality biscuits manufactured by the most reputed manufacturers like 'Parle' and/or of the same standard ones in the trains, restaurants, platforms etc.; and

(d) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI SATPAL MAHARAJ): (a) No, Sir.

(b) and (c) Biscuits manufactured by reputed firms are procured for sale by the Catering Departments on the Indian Railways. Northern Railway have shortlisted Britannia, Parle, Horlicks, Cremicas and Bakemans for procurement of quality brand biscuits. Intensive checks are also conducted periodically to ensure sale of quality biscuits.

(d) Does not arise.

Arrival/departure of trains at Mirzapur Station

2693. SHRI JALALUDIN ANSARI: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) the details alongwith names of Mail/Express Trains arriving at and departing from Main Platform No. 1 of Mirzapur Railway Station of the Northern Railway; and

(b) the details of facilities provided on the plantform for the passengers?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI SATPAL MAHARAJ): (a) and (b) The information is being collected and will be laid on the Table of the Sabha.

Ban on export of potatoes from West Bengal

2694. SHRI NILOTPAL BASU: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware that the export of potatoes is banned since 1950 from West Bengal;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor;

(c) whether Government would reverse the decision on the basis of an immediate review; and

(d) if so, whether Government will spell out a tentative time schedule?

THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI CHATURANAN MISHRA): (a) Sir, the movement of potatoes from West Bengal has been banned with effect from 1959.

(b) The ban had been imposed due to presence of potato wart disease which requires strict domestic plant quarantine measures to check further spread of the disease.

(c) As the disease is still prevalent in some parts of the Darjeeling District of West Bengal, a proposal to modify the ban and restrict it to the disease affected areas is under consideration in consultation with the Central Potato Research Institute and the State Government.

(d) Sir, it is not possible to spell out a tentative time schedule at this stage as the requisite details are awaited from the State Government.